2007-05368/

Ontario

Ontario Women's Directorate

NEWSRELEASE

March 8 , 2005

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
Promoting Women's Economic Independence and Safety

QUEEN'S PARK – The McGuinty government recognizes March 8 as International Women's Day – an opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made toward advancing women's equality.

"Our government is committed to helping women prosper in Ontario," said Sandra Pupatello, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues. " We are taking steps to improve services and supports that will achieve women's safety and financial security."

Over the past 18 months the government has announced a series of initiatives that benefit Ontario women, including:

- A comprehensive Domestic Violence Action Plan designed to better protect women and their children who are victims, and change attitudes to help prevent violence from happening over the long term.
- Improved access to counselling for women victims of sexual assault by increasing funding to sexual assault centres across the province by $1.9 million – the first increase in 13 years.
- A three-per cent increase in Ontario Works Benefits and Ontario Disability Supports, which largely help women and their children.
- Greater access for Ontario families to quality child care through the creation of up to 4,000 additional subsidized day-care spaces, as part of the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care
- Continued support for programs that help unemployed and low-income women train for better jobs. The Women in Skilled Trades program provides pre-apprenticeship training in a range of skilled trades that are in high demand across Ontario. Information Technology Training for Women helps disadvantaged women, including those with disabilities and immigrant women, gain IT skills and experience in the workplace
- An additional $25 million over five years for the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy to strengthen primary care, reduce family violence and improve family wellness in Aboriginal communities.
- A commitment of $1 million to community laboratories for equipment and new technology for cervical cancer screening.

"I am proud of our government's achievements in advancing women's well-being in Ontario, especially women who face financial challenges or are victims of violence," said Pupatello. "Women have a right to equal and full participation in our society. By doing more to protect women from violence and advancing women's economic independence, we know we are building stronger, safer and more vital communities."

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Last Modified: March 8, 2005